GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1801
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2002
ELECTION IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR
AMAR ROY PRADHAN

Will the Minister of LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the time by when the elections in Jammu and Kashmir is likely to be conducted;

(b) the details of steps being taken by Election Commission to conduct free and fair elections in Jammu and Kashmir; and

(c) the other steps the Government propose to take in getting the free and fair elections in the State?

Answer

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. JANA KRISHNAMURTHI)

(a) The Election Commission of India has informed that it has not yet decided on the programme for general election to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir.

(b) & (c) The conduct of elections to Legislative Assemblies and Parliament is the sole responsibility of the Election Commission of India. The steps taken by the Election Commission on its own / in consultation with the Central Government / State Government of Jammu & Kashmir in respect of conduct of free and fair elections in Jammu and Kashmir are summarized below:-

1. Making available to all concerned in the State clean, legible, computerized electoral rolls of high accuracy, which would form the basis for the electorate to cast their votes. The electoral rolls of all the 87 assembly constituencies in the State have been computerized in Urdu and copies thereof distributed, free of cost, to all recognized political parties as well as to all those registered unrecognized political parties in the State which have legislative presence i.e. which have even one representative in the Legislative Assembly of Jammu & Kashmir.

2. Using electronic voting machines in all the polling stations. Provision of voting through the electronic voting machines has also been extended to the Kashmiri Pandit voters stationed in camps in Jammu and Delhi.

3. Rationalizing the situation of polling stations by dispersing and locating them as far as practicable at the locations indicated in the lists of polling stations as available in the electoral rolls of 1988, subject to the changes approved by the Commission, so that not more than 3 polling stations are housed in one building and by and large no voter has to traverse more than 2 Kilometers to reach his polling station.

4. Issuing directions to the law and order authorities to ensure that there is a measure of equity amongst recognized political parties in getting security cover so that their election campaign can take place on an equitable basis. For this purpose, on the request of the Election Commission, the Union Government has directed the State Government to provide security cover, at the State cost, to one leader of each recognized National and State Party in each of the Districts in the valley and in the Districts of Doda, Rajouri, Poonch and Jammu.

5. Issuance of special Photo Identity Cards to voters in the State.The Election Commission, in view of the security implications of these cards, has entrusted to the India Security Press, Nasik, the task of preparing pre-formatted, pre-numbered photo identity cards on special security paper on which the elector`s photograph furnished by him would be affixed and the card laminated and issued to him.

6. Generation of voters slips, through computerization of electoral rolls, on household basis for the voters in the State and issuance thereof to them at their door steps.

7. Sending senior civil servants with known capabilities, proven track record and dynamism as Observers to oversee the election process in the State.